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NATURE'S FASHIONS
IN LADY'S SLIPPERS



BY C. S. YOUNG



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*"How strange to greet this frosty morn,
In graceful counterfeit of flowers,
These children of the meadows born
Of sunshine and of showers."*



ALL OF NATURE'S FASHIONS IN
LADY'S SLIPPERS FOR THE NORTH-
ERN AND EASTERN PARTS OF THE
UNITED STATES ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣

WITH PHOTOGRAVURES FROM THE LIVING PLANT

By C. S. YOUNG.

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CYPRIPEDIUM

From the Greek words

Κύπρις	Venus
Πόδιον	A sock or buskin

VENUS' SLIPPER, more generally called LADY'S SLIPPER
or MOCCASON FLOWER

1850-56 C. H. H. H.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Cypripedium arietinum :

Ram's Head Lady's Slipper.

Cypripedium candidum :

Small White Lady's Slipper.

Cypripedium pubescens :

Large Yellow Lady's Slipper, or Whip-poor-Will Shoe.

Cypripedium parviflorum :

Small Yellow Lady's Slipper.

Cypripedium acaule :

Stemless Lady's Slipper, Pink Lady's Slipper.

Cypripedium spectabile :

Showy Lady's Slipper.



OF all the native orchids of our northern states the *Cypripediums* are the handsomest, and most generally known and appreciated.

Our English forefathers called them "Our Lady's Slippers," the French, "Virgin's Sabots," while to the Indians they were the "Moccason Flower." In describing them, I have omitted, for the most part, the usual scientific descriptions, as these can be easily obtained elsewhere. These illustrations are made from photographs of the living plants, and are therefore absolutely correct, the lens of the camera putting in nothing superfluous, or leaving out nothing, either of faults or perfections. The size of the flower in relation to the leaf, the leaf to the stem, the curve of the stem, and the pubescence are all shown exactly as possessed by the plant.

The *Cypripedium parviflorum* I have given as photographed May 19, but I have seen it in blossom well into the month of June.

The *Cypripedium spectabile* was photographed June 15, but as the specimen came from Maine,

it would naturally flower there about two weeks later than in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Cypripedium acaule, in the same locality varies hardly a day from May 20, year after year, but in some favored places it comes into flower a little earlier.

It is said that the Japanese consider it inartistic to mass flowers into bouquets, and it is especially true of *Cypripediums* that one or two placed in a vase with a little green is more effective than the many grouped together.





CYPRIPEDIUM ARIETINUM.

Ram's Head Lady's Slipper.

THIS plant is very attractive, and except in a few localities in northern New England, is rare, reminding one of Mr. Burroughs' discoveries of the *Cypripediums* in general, — namely, that they are fond of retirement, and whenever he came across them their exclusiveness made him feel like an intruder.

By referring to the illustration, it will be seen that the top of the curiously arranged lip is white, and the face of it dark: it is in reality a reddish brown. The shape of the blossom has been likened to a ram's head, its lateral petals resembling the horns. Mr. Baldwin says, "I strongly suspect that some elf, refused a night's lodging in the cradle of a Pink Lady's Slipper, and faring no better on application to a Yellow Lady's Slipper, originated the pert little Ram's Head as a caricature of both."

Whenever I see this plant, or even look at the picture, I feel that I am closely watched by this bright, lively little orchid, and that on slight provocation it would use its horns.

The white spots on the leaves, as shown in the illustration, are holes eaten probably by insects.

This is the smallest species of the *Cypripediums* except, possibly, the *C. candidum*, which grows to about the same height.

It should be looked for in the latter part of May and early in June.

CYPRIPEDIUM ARIETINUM.

Ram's Head Lady's Slipper.

Photographed May 16, from the living plant.

Two-thirds full size.





CYPRIPEDIUM CANDIDUM.

Small White Lady's Slipper.

NEW ENGLAND can lay no claim to this beautiful little white stranger, and indeed there are but few localities that can boast of its presence. It has been found in central New York, from which place the specimen photographed arrived, and in bogs and wet places to the westward and southward. When I had photographed this little creature, developed my plate and found I had secured an unfading picture of this plant from the swamps of central New York, a feeling of awe came over me to think that the plant could wilt and fade, but that it was preserved as an undying representative of its race; and that if the beautiful orchid had ever had the feeling of not being appreciated, it could now be presented to admirers of wild flowers, and be loved by all that should see it.

The pouch of the *candidum* is of pure white, of the size of a sparrow's egg, while the plant itself is about six inches high.

The leaves are long and clasping, which gives the stalk a heavy appearance, until it shoots up above the leaf, where it is small and delicate.

CYPRIPEDIUM CANDIDUM.

Small White Lady's Slipper.

Photographed May 18, from the living plant.
Two-thirds full size.





CYPRIPEDIUM PUBESCENS.

Large Yellow Lady's Slipper or Whip-poor-Will Shoe.

BIRDS and flowers easily associate themselves together in our minds as fit playmates of the woods, making the name of Whip-poor-Will Shoe especially pleasing.

Its lemon-colored pouch is flattened laterally, while its sepals are long and wavy. The leaves are broadly ovate, pubescent and very large and long. This plant has a stocky appearance; in fact, it looks as if when it first came from the ground it had been undecided whether to be a stemless plant, with two large root-leaves like the Pink Lady's Slipper, or have leaves on its stem like the Small Yellow Lady's Slipper.

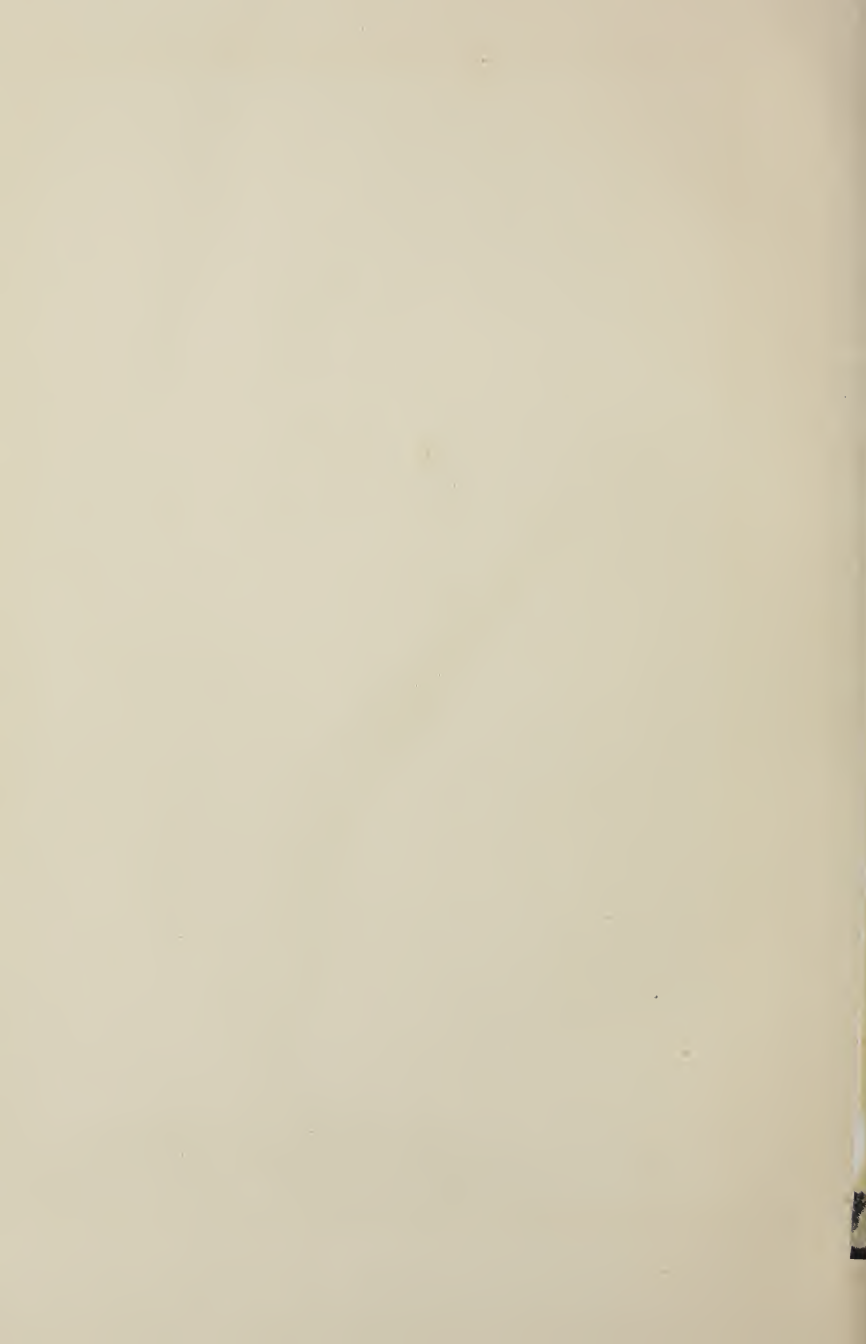
It is more common than the *C. parviflorum* but is thought not to be distributed over so large an area. It grows in low grounds and damp woods. The time of blossoming, the latter part of May and early June, corresponds very nearly with that of the smaller variety.

CYPRIPEDIUM PUBESCENS.

Large Yellow Lady's Slipper, Whip-poor-Will Shoe.

Photographed May 18, from the living plant.
Two-thirds full size.







CYPRIPEDIUM PARVIFLORUM.

Small Yellow Lady's Slipper.

THIS blossom, with its small, pouting lip of rich yellow, its side petals coquettishly twisted, presents a daintier appearance than the Larger Yellow Lady's Slipper, while its perfume is quite marked. The plant, which is from eight to twelve inches high, frequently produces two blossoms.

The petals are longer than the lip or pouch, and both petals and sepals are brown-purple. Its leaves are alternate, oval, very broad and pointed, and the edges are unusually wavy.

The stem is more leafy, and the pouch is of a deeper yellow than that of the *C. pubescens*, into which Gray says this species passes. It was introduced into England from North America over a hundred years ago.

It is to be found in low woods and shady, damp, and wet places, and is distributed through the northern states, and flowers from early in May well into June.

CYPRIPEDIUM PARVIFLORUM.

Small Yellow Lady's Slipper.

Photographed May 19 from the living plant.
One-half full size.





CYPRIPEDIUM ACAULE.

Stemless Lady's Slipper.

To the unscientific lover of flowers the name Lady's Slipper brings up a delightful vision of a quaint rose-colored flower, with an airy balloon-like pouch. This is the *C. acaule*, or Pink Lady's Slipper, the most common of all the varieties. Rising erect and graceful on its slender stalk, it may be found in dry or moist woods in May and June.

Elaine Goodale speaks of it as "shy and proud," and it is not as difficult to realize that this Slipper and the *spectabile* are related to the curious tropical varieties we see exhibited as rarities, as their more modest-appearing sisters.

The flower stem with the flower is from ten to fifteen inches high and springs directly from between the two large ribbed oval, lanceolate root leaves. The other Lady's Slippers, as can be seen from the illustration, have stem leaves.

Somehow, to me, this large, pink blossom, nodding brightly in every breeze, has a happier appearance than any of the others; and although the Showy is undoubtedly the handsomest, I love the Pink Lady's Slipper best.

CYPRIPEDIUM ACAULE.

Stemless Lady's Slipper. Pink Lady's Slipper.

Photographed May 20 from the living plant.
Two-thirds full size.





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All of nature's fashions in
lady's slippers for the northern and
eastern parts of the United States.
Boston, W. H. Widdien, 1895.



CYPRIPEDIUM SPECTABILE.

Showy Lady's Slipper.

THIS plant, which is quite stout, has a downy stem and leaves, and often produces more than one flower. It thrives in swamps, and may be found in Maine, western New England and throughout Wisconsin.

Bigelow calls this the Tall Lady's Slipper, and, with Gray, mentions its growing to the height of two feet, but those that I have seen have not exceeded one foot, while the plant I have selected to photograph, as an average specimen from possibly twelve or more, measured only ten inches. This would indicate that it varies considerably in different localities.

The lip of white, variegated with pink-purple, is much inflated, and its oblong petals are shorter than the sepals. This is appropriately called the Showy Lady's Slipper, and is generally considered the handsomest of them all, but it has rather a stiff, precise effect.

It stands up firm and straight, as if it were on exhibition, and seems to say, "Look at me, I am handsomer than my relatives."

CYPRIPEDIUM SPECTABILE.

Showy Lady's Slipper.

Photographed June 15, from the living plant.
Two-thirds full size.







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